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ABSTRACT

Advocates of participative management in academic libraries point to increased job satisfaction and performance as benefits, while opponents favor less participative means such as consultive management, with librarians having input and the directors making the decisions. A survey of reference librarians in the Texas community colleges was conducted to ascertain their views on the effectiveness of shared decision making or participatory management, and the extent to which such practices were employed in their libraries. The survey employed a statement format, with respondents indicating their agreement on a 2- to 5-point scale. Usable surveys were returned by 64 librarians for an 81% response rate. Among respondents, two-thirds were female, 25% had over 10 years experience, 64% had faculty status, and 73% had reference as their primary duty. Survey results included the following: (1) 81% agreed that participation in management increased job satisfaction, while 75% indicated that participation improved performance; (2) 69% of the respondents felt their administrator encouraged participation in decision making; (3) 70% reported that their administrators shared authority at least occasionally; (4) 51% of the respondents advocated more committees allowing librarians to participate in decisions which affected them; and (4) communication from the library administrator to the librarians and staff was considered good by 67%. Appendixes include the study survey and selected comments from the open-ended portion of the survey. (GFW)

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A SURVEY ON PARTICIPATIVE MANAGEMENT AMONG TEXAS COMMUNITY COLLEGE REFERENCE LIBRARIANS

BY

EXA LYNN PORTER

SEPTEMBER 1990

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A Survey on Participative Management Among Texas Community College Reference Librarians

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A review of the literature on participative management in academic libraries indicates that it has both advocates and opponents. Advocates point to increased satisfaction when participative management is used, while opponents favor less participative means such as consultative management with librarians having input and the directors making the decisions. A survey of Texas community college reference librarians indicates that a significant majority favor participative management and shared decision-making in their libraries. They describe the extent to which participative management functions in their libraries or learning resource centers. The study includes demographic characteristics of the reference librarians who responded to the survey. It contains tables of results, a sample survey, selected response comments and a bibliography.

Descriptors: Community Colleges; Decision Making; Librarians; Libraries; Library Administration; Library Personnel; Library Research; Motivation Techniques; Personnel Management.

Identifiers: *Participative Management; Reference.

A SURVEY ON PARTICIPATIVE MANAGEMENT AMONG TEXAS COMMUNITY COLLEGE REFERENCE LIBRARIANS

By Exa Lynn Porter

I. INTRODUCTION

Over the past twenty years the theory has been advanced that participative management, the process of allowing employees to participate in the decisions which they are asked to execute, contributes to employee satisfaction and efficiency. This theory has been explored in academic libraries as well as in business and industry.

This study was undertaken to explore the extent of participation by Texas community college reference librarians in the decision-making and management of their libraries. The results of the study will be used to describe whether Texas community college reference librarians perceive shared decision-making or participatory management as desirable and the extent to which such shared decision-making or participatory management functions in their libraries.

A survey was chosen as the research method for this study because a survey can be an effective way to measure the characteristics of a large, and in this case geographically widespread, population. The survey was reasonably cost effective, it is verifiable and replicable.

It saved time and yielded a good quantity of data. The survey was a self-administered cross-sectional mail-out designed to measure attitudes of a group of people engaged in work similar to that of the researcher.

A review of the literature indicated a growth in the trend toward the inclusion of participatory management in academic libraries. In his book Participative Management in Academic Libraries, Maurice Marchant (1976) viewed the academic library as an open system which must respond to a number of external influences. Marchant conducted a multivariate empirical study and a supplemental field study which revealed that staff satisfaction was affected by many factors including management style and particularly opportunities for upward communication. Nicholas Burckel (1984), in his article "Participatory Management in Academic Libraries: A Review," pointed out that elements of participatory management had been introduced in academic libraries in the late 1960's and early 1970's partially as an attempt to create more flexibility in essentially hierarchical bureaucracies. Burckel noted a number of proponents of participative management as well as a number of opponents. He concluded that participative management, while increasing some job satisfaction, did not always live up to expectations and could not be seen as a substitute for individual responsibility and leadership. Dale Susan Bengston and Dorothy Shields duplicated Marchant's study in

1981-82 by surveying librarians at Brigham Young University. They again found that management style was the best predictor of librarian satisfaction in an academic setting. They noted that BYU had more of a consultative than true participatory management style. Herbert White (1985) in his article "Participative Management Is the Answer, But What Was the Question?" favored consultative management for most decisions, with librarians having input and the director making the final decision. According to White, participative management should be used within well-defined boundaries for decisions relating to the way in which individuals accomplish the library's objectives. Merrily Taylor (1984) in her article "Participatory Management and the New Librarian Model," pointed out the importance of training future librarians so that they will have the necessary skills and realistic expectations to bring to the participative management process. Of particular interest to the researcher was an article entitled "A Survey of Participative Management in California State University Libraries" by Ellen Gerry and Susan Klingberg (1988). This article detailed the way in which their survey was conducted and included some of their questions and tables of results. The authors were contacted, and Ms. Klingberg supplied a copy of their survey along with her permission to use portions of the survey. Ms. Gerry spoke of not having an arrangement for

releasing the questionnaire at this time. The researcher decided therefore not to use any questions directly from their survey but to adapt some of the questions for use in this study.

The purposes of this study were:

(1) to determine whether Texas community college reference librarians favor the concept of participative management/shared decision making,

(2) to determine the extent to which Texas community college reference librarians actually participate in decision-making in their libraries.

II. CONSTRUCTION AND ADMINISTRATION OF SURVEY INSTRUMENT

The population for this study was the group of reference librarians in Texas community colleges. Community colleges in Texas have a mission to serve their communities by providing the first two years of academic work toward a four-year degree, by providing occupational and technical programs, and by supplying continuing education offerings for adults in the community. Thus the libraries which serve these community colleges will differ from those at large research-oriented universities. Reference librarians in Texas community colleges typically serve under a director, possibly with other librarians and with clerical staff and student assistants. The researcher

first consulted directories to determine the actual numbers and names of the reference librarians in Texas community colleges. A membership list of the Reference Roundtable of the Texas Library Association (1988) did not include librarians for all Texas community colleges, and the American Library Directory (1988) did not include exact numbers or names. While the number of reference librarians was difficult to determine precisely, surveys were sent to the 62 Texas community colleges/college districts. It was expected that their responses would either match or fail to match indications of the existence and acceptance of participative management found in similar studies.

The sample decided upon in this case was the entire population due to the small actual number of institutions and the vast size and geographic differences among the institutions.

Data collection was by a mailed questionnaire sent to the reference librarian(s) of each community college. (See Appendix A.) Each college received at least one questionnaire, with those listed in 1987 Texas Academic Library Statistics as having larger professional staffs receiving at least one survey for each three professional staff members since directors, media librarians and cataloging librarians also work in community college libraries. This figure represented an estimate of the number of reference librarians at each institution. Access

was gained by consulting the American Library Directory (1987 edition) and College Blue Book (1987-88 edition) for addresses of the various institutions.

Up to two individual surveys with stamped self-addressed return envelopes were included in each envelope. Multiple envelopes were used for more than 2 surveys. Address labels were used and a duplicate set was used for follow-ups. In all, 95 surveys were mailed on March 31; and by April 17, 51 surveys were returned. On April 18, a follow up letter with one additional survey and return envelope was mailed to the 20 institutions from which no response had been received. As of May 20, thirteen additional surveys were received making a total of 64 responses. With librarians responding from 50 of the 62 institutions surveyed, this represented nearly an 81 % response rate which is considered good for this type of survey. If return figures are based on actual numbers of surveys sent out, then nearly 67 % of the surveys were returned which is still above the average response rate of 50 % for surveys of this type. While the time allotted was brief, the majority of surveys were returned within the first week, and only a few trickled in after that. Since responses were received from four-fifths of the institutions, the results can reasonably be assumed to be representative of the population surveyed.

Respondents were informed in the cover letter at the

top of the survey that "this survey is a part of a course" and that "all responses will be kept confidential." Confidentiality was maintained in that no names were requested and individual surveys received only an institutional code number. The respondent's consent to be surveyed was implied since the respondent had the choice of not completing and returning the survey. The code number enabled the researcher to ascertain whether responses were obtained from the various institutions and to send follow-up letters and surveys to those institutions from which responses were not received. A few individuals identified themselves by name and one requested a copy of the results, if published. A brief summary of the results was included in the Texas community college library publication Learning Resources Notes, but individual responses were not identified with any person or institution.

The questionnaire items included items on demographics and on the librarians' perceptions about their participation in the decision-making process in their libraries. A statement format was used throughout the survey with respondents being asked to indicate their degree of agreement with each statement on a 2-5 point scale. Items # 6 and # 11-13 were purposely made into negative statements to test the internal validity of the survey. These negative items were scaled in reverse. As

it turned out, item # 13 about informal structures such as "the grapevine" seemed to be somewhat ambiguous since responses did not vary in the same way as expected. A space was also left for comments which 25 out of the 64 respondents utilized. (See Appendix B.) This added to the richness of the data obtained and added to the researcher's overall knowledge about the libraries in which these 25 librarians worked.

Demographic items were placed at the beginning of the survey as well as at the end to better insure at least a minimum of data relating to the respondents' position. In items # 1-3, the librarians were asked if reference was their primary area of responsibility, if librarians had faculty status, and if they served on any library committees. Possible responses to these questions were either yes, no, or not applicable. In items #" 23-28, the librarians were asked to describe their number of years at their present institution (from less than 1 to 30+), their age group (from under 30 to 60+), their gender, the number of librarians they supervise (from 0 to 9+), the number of non-librarian staff they supervise (from 0 to 9+), and their contract status (1 yr, 2+5 years, tenure, or other). These gave a picture of the experience, status, and supervisory responsibilities of the librarians being surveyed.

Opinions on the desirability of having

non-administrative librarians participate in library decision-making were elicited in items # 4 and 5. One related to the effect of participative management on job satisfaction and the other related to its effect on job performance.

Items # 6,9,10,14,19-22 related to the librarians' perceptions of whether the existing management style was effective, if their administrators encouraged librarians to participate in decision-making, if the librarians' input was accepted and used, whether shared decision-making was used in their library, and how frequently the library administrator consulted, requested recommendations, shared authority, and delegated authority.

The extent and effectiveness of library communications were explored in items # 7,8,13,19,20, and to a certain extent, # 9 and 10. Librarians were asked whether there was a free flow of information from the library administrator down, and from the staff and librarians up to the administrator. Item # 13 was intended to explore whether informal communication through "the grapevine" was a significant channel of communication. In # 9 and 10, librarians were asked whether their suggestions were sought and used. Similarly in # 19 and 20, they were asked how frequently their administrators consulted other librarians and asked for librarians' recommendations.

Items # 3,11,12,15-18 related to the librarians'

committee participation. They were asked if they served on any committees, what types of committees offered them opportunities for decision-making, whether they thought there were an adequate number of committees, whether the committee meetings were productive, and the extent to which they would prefer to serve on library committees.

The researcher attempted to make the survey items as exhaustive and as mutually exclusive as possible. Some items were broad and elicited an overview opinion like # 14 which asked if shared decision-making was used in their libraries. Then others treated more specific aspects of shared decision-making such as the items on communication, committee participation and management style.

A number of the questionnaire items were pretested on the researcher's husband who conducted a survey as part of his Masters thesis. He made suggestions on some of the item wording and on the sequence of items. The completed survey was reviewed by a probation officer supervisor who has conducted many surveys and by a teacher who is nearing completion of her Masters degree in another state. They questioned the inclusion of negative items and suggested changes in the cover letter wording to elicit greater response. The survey was also reviewed by the researcher's peers in a survey course and was generally found to be readable and clear. The researcher's professor suggested making the cover letter more anonymous and therefore less

threatening. The researcher felt that these individuals would have a similar educational level to the librarians being surveyed and could therefore be good judges of its readability.

The self-administered mail-out survey was chosen as a convenient, non-threatening method of reaching a large number of community college reference librarians across Texas. Indeed, the response rate was above average and four-fifths of the institutions were described in the responses. A personally conducted survey by telephone or in person would have been much more costly, and possibly more threatening. It still might not have obtained a higher response rate, since some librarians might have been unavailable, too busy to be interviewed, or simply unwilling to be interviewed. Follow ups were sent to non-respondents after three weeks as an extra step to insure responses.

The closed-end questions made it easier to quantify and tabulate the data in the responses. However, additional data was obtained from the 25 respondents who offered comments in the open section provided on the questionnaire.

III. DATA ANALYSIS

After responses were received, they were noted by their institution number on the list of college addresses. The

responses then were given a survey number for tabulation purposes. Although it was possible to link responses to their institutions, this was not done so that confidentiality would be maintained. The responses were manually coded by writing 1 by an A response, 2 by a B response, etc. and reversing the numbering sequence for the four negatively worded survey items. The coded responses for each survey were then noted on a coded response sheet. Comments were noted by a 1 if present and a 0 if not present. Unanswered items were assigned a 0.
The results were then manually tallied on a graph charting the frequency distribution of responses to each question. The number of responses for each category were then divided by the total number of surveys received (64) to obtain a percentage for each response category.

From the demographic data in questions #1-3 and 23-28 the researcher was able to obtain information about persons serving as community college reference librarians in Texas. Approximately two-thirds were females and one-third were males. They varied in age from under thirty (5%) to above sixty (5%) with 30% in their thirties, 39% in their forties, and 17% in their fifties. Years at present institution ranged from less than one year (9%) to over twenty years (11%) with 50% having from one to nine years experience and 25% having from ten to nineteen years experience. Some 64% had faculty status, 58% served on at

least one library committee, 57% had one-to-five year contracts and 20% had tenure. Only 27% supervised one or more librarians with 78% supervising one or more non-librarians (63% supervised 1 to 4). About 73% had reference as their primary duty.

Responses to questions # 4 and 5 indicated that 81% agreed that participation by librarians in such matters as planning, budgeting and staff development increased job satisfaction and 75% agreed that it improved job performance.

TABLE I

EFFECTIVENESS OF PARTICIPATION

	(A) Str.Dis.	(B) Dis.	(C) No Op.	(D) Agree	(E) Str.Ag.
4. Participation increased job satisfaction	2%	16%	2%	3%	78%
5. Participation improved job performance	14%	2%	9%	42%	33%

The librarians' perceptions of the management style in their libraries were mixed as reflected in items # 6, 9,10,14,19-22.

About 59% felt that the management style was effective, 8% had no opinion and 31% thought that there was room for improvement. About 69% felt that their administrator encouraged librarians to participate in decision-making and 74% felt that many of their suggestions were accepted and used. About 65% agreed that shared decision-making was

used in the management of their libraries. Some 82% reported that their administrator consulted other librarians at least occasionally, and 84% said that the administrator requests recommendations from other librarians at least occasionally. About 70% reported that their administrators shared authority at least occasionally, and 76% said that authority was delegated part of the time.

TABLE II

MANAGEMENT STYLE

	(A) Str.Dis.	(B) Dis.	(C) No Op.	(D) Agree	(E) Str.Ag.
6. Management style is inadequate	16%	43%	8%	20%	11%
9. Administrator encourages participation	11%	17%	2%	52%	17%
10. Administrator uses suggestions	6%	13%	5%	52%	22%
14. Shared decision-making is used	13%	16%	3%	56%	9%

TABLE III

MANAGEMENT STYLE (CONT.)

	(A) Never	(B) Seldom	(C) Occas.	(D) Often	(E) Freq.
19. Administrator consults	6%	11%	27%	33%	22%
20. Administrator requests recommendations	5%	9%	41%	23%	20%
21. Administrator shares authority	16%	11%	31%	25%	14%
22. Administrator delegates authority	6%	13%	27%	27%	22%

Items #3,11,12,15, and 16-18 examined the reference librarians' perceptions of their participation in library committees. Committee participation was the area which received the most comments with a number of librarians indicating that their libraries were too small for committees. Some 51% preferred to see more committees that allow librarians to participate in the decisions which affect them, and only 8% preferred not to be involved in too many library committee activities. Nearly 43% were not sure that their committee meetings were productive. About 73% indicated at least occasional involvement with a reference librarian group, 65% were involved in a planning group, and 59% participated in some form of budget committee.

TABLE IV

COMMITTEE PARTICIPATION

	(A) Str.Dis.	(B) Dis.	(C) No Op.	(D) Agree	(E) Str.Ag.
11. Not enough committees	11%	41%	16%	25%	5%
12. Prefer not to be involved in committees	39%	42%	9%	3%	5%
15. Committee meetings are productive	9%	14%	20%	42%	9%

TABLE V

COMMITTEE PARTICIPATION (CONT.)

	(A) Never	(B) Seldom	(C) Occas.	(D) Often	(E) Freq.
16. Reference librarian group	9%	8%	28%	28%	17%
17. Planning committee	13%	13%	33%	19%	13%
18. Budget committee	13%	16%	23%	23%	13%

Communication from the library administrator to the librarians and staff was considered good by 67%. Communication from the staff and librarians to the administrator was seen as good by 76%. Informal "grapevine" was seen as influential by about 41%. These were surveyed in items #7,8 and 13.

TABLE VI

EFFECTIVENESS OF COMMUNICATION

	(A) Str.Dis.	(B) Dis.	(C) No Op.	(D) Agree	(E) Str.Ag.
7. Free flow of info. from top down	8%	20%	3%	47%	20%
8. Free flow of info. from bottom up	3%	17%	2%	54%	22%
13. Grapevine has has significant influence	14%	30%	13%	27%	14%

IV. CRITIQUE

The study was significant in that reference librarians in about four-fifths of the community colleges of Texas responded. Thus the results can be said to be fairly representative of the population. Opportunities to respond to closed ended and open ended questions allowed for additional input by the librarians.

The study was limited by the researcher's experience in constructing surveys. Additional follow ups might have yielded a higher return rate. Further analysis could have been conducted to establish correlations between satisfaction or disatisfaction with management style and the degree of participation in decision-making.

APPENDIX A - SAMPLE SURVEY

Dear Reference Librarian,

I work as a community college reference librarian and am currently pursuing graduate studies in higher education. This survey is part of one course. It is being sent to reference/public service librarians in Texas community colleges to determine their participation in library decision-making. Please take a few minutes to complete the survey. All responses will be kept confidential. Number codes are only for the purpose of sending out follow-ups as needed.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,
Lynn Porter, Reference Librarian

PLEASE WRITE THE LETTER OF YOUR RESPONSE TO EACH QUESTION IN THE SPACE AT THE END OF EACH QUESTION.

1. Reference/public service is my primary area of responsibility.
   (A) Yes (B) No 1._____

2. Librarians at my college have faculty status.
   (A) Yes (B) No 2._____

3. I am a member of at least one library group or committee which has an impact on major policies.
   (A) Yes (B) No (C) Not Applicable 3._____

4. Participation by librarians in such matters as planning, budgeting and staff development results in increased job satisfaction.
   (A) Strongly Disagree (B) Disagree (C) No Opinion (D) Agree (E) Strongly Agree 4._____

5. Participation by librarians in such matters as planning, budgeting and staff development results in improved job performance.
   (A) Strongly Disagree (B) Disagree (C) No Opinion (D) Agree (E) Strongly Agree 5._____

6. The existing management style in my library is inadequate for the effective functioning of the library.
   (A) Strongly Disagree (B) Disagree (C) No Opinion (D) Agree (E) Strongly Agree 6._____

7. In my library there is a free flow of information from the library administrator to the librarians and staff.
   (A) Strongly Disagree (B) Disagree (C) No Opinion (D) Agree (E) Strongly Agree 7._____

8. In my library there is a free flow of information from the staff and librarians to the library administrator.
   (A) Strongly Disagree (B) Disagree (C) No Opinion (D) Agree (E) Strongly Agree 8._____

9. The top administrator in my library encourages all librarians to participate in decision-making.

(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	No Opinion	Agree	Strongly Agree	9._____

10. The top administrator in my library accepts and uses many of the suggestions made by the other librarians.

(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	No Opinion	Agree	Strongly Agree	10._____

11. My library does not have enough committees, task forces, or organizations that allow librarians to participate in decisions which affect them.

(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	No Opinion	Agree	Strongly Agree	11._____

12. I prefer not to be involved in various library committee activities.

(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	No Opinion	Agree	Strongly Agree	12._____

13. Informal structures, such as "the grapevine," significantly influence the formal operation of my library.

(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	No Opinion	Agree	Strongly Agree	13._____

14. In the management of my library, shared decision-making is used.

(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	No Opinion	Agree	Strongly Agree	14._____

15. The library committee meetings I attend are productive.

(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	No Opinion	Agree	Strongly Agree	15._____

In my library, opportunities for librarians to participate in decisions on library policies or procedures exist in the following groups:

16. Public service/reference librarians group

(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	
Never	Seldom	Occasionally	Often	Frequently	16._____

17. Planning committee

(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	
Never	Seldom	Occasionally	Often	Frequently	17._____

18. Budget committee (for library materials, equipment, etc.)

(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	
Never	Seldom	Occasionally	Often	Frequently	18._____

On decisions related to library policies or procedures, the library administrator:

19. Consults with the other librarians.

(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	
Never	Seldom	Occasionally	Often	Frequently	19._____

20. Requests recommendations from the other librarians.

(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	
Never	Seldom	Occasionally	Often	Frequently	20._____

21. Shares authority.

(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	
Never	Seldom	Occasionally	Often	Frequently	21._____

22. Delegates authority.

(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	
Never	Seldom	Occasionally	Often	Frequently	22._____

Please feel free to make any additional comments below:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Please share as much of the following information as you wish:

23. Number of years in present institution:

(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	(F)	(G)	(H)	
Less than 1	1-4	5-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-29	30+	23._____

24. Your age group:

(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	
Under 30	30-39	40-49	50-59	60+	24._____

25. Your gender: (A) Female (B) Male 25._____

26. Number of librarians you supervise directly:

(A) 0 (B) 1-4 (C) 5-8 (D) 9+ 26._____

27. Number of non-librarian staff you supervise directly:

(A) 0 (B) 1-4 (C) 5-8 (D) 9+ 27._____

28. Your contract status:

(A) 1 year (B) 2-5 year (C) Tenure (D) Other 28._____

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION

APPENDIX B - SELECTED COMMENTS

* A staff of only two librarians means that we both make up the groups mentioned.

* Whether my director asks for information from other librarians on the other campuses, I do not know. She never asks for my input.

* These questions are directed to a position we do not have. We have one professional and two assistants. Although the respondent serves as "Head Librarian," the three of us share most responsibilities, out of necessity, except some decision-making and cataloging.

* I am both the Director and part-time reference librarian, book binder, porter, custodian, and sometime Johnny-go-fetch-it. I hope that my high opinion of my work will not upset your statistics; I think that it is in the large part true.

* Do not have a large enough professional staff to welcome additional committee assignments-only two people. We work with no contract.

* Committees work if everyone brings expertise to the meeting. If a committee is formed to scatter responsibility it will not be productive. A committee usually only makes suggestions rather than making policies.

* There are only 4 professionals in this library. We are very informal - we never have formal committee or even staff meetings. It would be helpful if we were more professionally structured.

* There are only two professional librarians in our situation - the library director and myself. We also have two para-professional employees in addition to a number of student work-studies. Committees are consequently unfeasible for our situation. The management style employed in our library is somewhat arbitrary, but apparently "works."

* Our organizational structure has changed recently, so I expect many more committees and small group activities.

* There are only 2 professionals in this library - the LRC Director and myself.

* Rarely are public service librarians consulted on budget, management etc. Mostly on policy and procedures since they have to carry these these out.

* This library has 2 librarians, the Director and myself. We supervise 3 full-time paraprofessionals and several work study students. Therefore, we do not have committees, etc. Decision-making within the library is informal and casually done.

* There is a "management team" of librarians which shares a good deal of the decision-making with the Director.

* I have survived 1.5 years in a very unusual library situation! I have never seen a library managed like this. Every decision must be made by the director! No idea has any validity unless it originates with her. No, this does not make for a happy work experience, and after 20+ years of professional and supervisory experience, I find it very difficult. Shared decision-making is healthy for all. Sharing ideas is not a weakness - the bull-dozing management style is not conducive for a good atmosphere, nor in the long run, does it benefit the patrons.

* He doesn't want to hear my input. Even if we could participate, he would still be schizophrenic and authoritarian. Half of the supervisors reporting directly to this administrator had filed grievances. However, he'll be here until he chooses to retire. It is a real pathological organization.

* My library is good about including me in its decision - making process. I wish the larger college administration felt the same - and this community at large. In those larger units I/we feel neglected. Involvement means dignity!

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